

Amendments to the claims

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-25 (Canceled)

26. (New) A method of forming a component, comprising:
 - heating an aluminum coated steel blank to an austenization temperature, causing an increase in layer thickness;
 - rapidly cooling said blank;
 - allowing said heat treated blank to stand at room temperature for an interval of time;
 - heating said cooled, heat treated blank a second time to an austenization temperature; and
 - forming said blank while heated to produce said component.
27. (New) A method according to claim 26 wherein the interval of the initial heating of said blank is in the range of 9 to 30 minutes.
28. (New) A method according to claim 26 wherein the conditions of the second heat treatment are controlled so as not to increase the layer thickness of the blank.
29. (New) A method according to claim 26 wherein the interval of the subsequent heating of said blank is in the range of 10 seconds to 2 ½ minutes.
30. (New) A method according to claim 26 including varying the heat applied to different portions of the surface of the blank.
31. (New) A method according to claim 26 including reinforcing said blank between said separate heat treatments.
32. (New) A method according to claim 26 including maintaining said blank in a heated condition while forming.